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Reserve

May 6, 1948

PMA FARM NEWS

ECA MEANS EXPORTS FOR
U. S. FARMERS

A European market for some of our most important farm commodities is what the recently enacted Economic Cooperation Act will mean to United States farmers.

Since Western Europe at best is dependent upon the outside world for much of its supply, food unquestionably must be a main point of the European recovery program. During the twenties and thirties, from 60 to 75 percent of U. S. agricultural exports went to the 16 participating countries.

For the first 12 months, April 1948 - March 1949, the Economic Cooperation Act authorizes an appropriation of \$5.3 billion, and states that additional funds shall be available through June, 1952 to the extent authorized and appropriated. As far as possible, the materials needed for the program will be procured through established private channels, and in such a way as to (1) minimize the drain upon the resources of the U. S. and the impact of such procurement upon the domestic economy and (2) avoid impairing the fulfillment of vital needs of the people of the United States. Surplus agricultural commodities will be worked into the program wherever practicable.

Estimated U. S. food exports of selected commodities during the first 15 months of the program's operation, compared with average exports to the participating countries (excluding dependent overseas territories) during the prewar years 1934-38, are as follows:

Commodity	U. S. Exports to ECA Countries, excluding dependent overseas territories, Preliminary		
	1934-38 Average	Apr.-June 1948 Estimated	Fiscal 1948-49 Estimated
Bread grains (1,000 bu.)	32,000	84,800	n. a.
Coarse grains (1,000 bu.)	29,000	5,300	n. a.
Total grains (1,000 bu.)	61,000	90,100	285,000
Fats and oils (mil. lbs.)	1/ 219	29	256
Processed milk (mil. lbs.)	1.5	314	628
Dried fruits and nuts (1,000 tons)	142	35	133
Tobacco (mil. lbs.)	2/ 293	110	437
Cotton (1,000 bales)	3,273	782	2,397

1/ 1937-41 average. 2/ 1935-39 average. n.a. Not available.

Since the ECA program seeks, as a primary objective, to promote agricultural production within the participating countries, such materials as fertilizer and farm machinery will also form a part of exports from the U. S. For the first 2 years, proposed exports of nitrogen would continue at the present rate -- about 8 percent of the U. S. commercial supply; none are scheduled for the last 2 years of the program. Shipments of phosphate rock would also continue at around 4 percent of domestic production.

About 8 percent of the U. S. production of farm machinery is planned for export to the ECA countries. This would be somewhat more than in recent years but increases in plant capacity would more than offset the shipments. U. S. farmers would have as much machinery available to them as at present.

To carry out the program, the Economic Cooperation Administration is set up in this country under the direction of an Administrator, (Paul Hoffman), who will advise and consult with a 12-member Public Advisory Board. Cooperating with ECA will be the Departments of State, Agriculture, Commerce, and other established agencies.

Abroad, responsibility for administering the program is centered in special ECA missions to be set up in each participating country. A. U. S. Special Representative in Europe (Averill C. Harriman, former Secretary of Commerce), having the rank of ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary will act as chief representative to any organization of participating countries to further a joint program for European recovery.

In carrying out its purposes, the act also authorizes the President to "request the cooperation of or the use of the services and facilities of the United Nations its organs and specialized agencies, or other international organizations." Copies of reports to Congress on ECA operations are to be sent to U. N.'s Secretary General and agreements between the U. S. and participating countries are to be registered with the United Nations.

#

SIGNS OF SOIL LOSSES It doesn't take a Hawkshaw, Sherlock Holmes, or Philo Vance to see the signs of a farm that is getting away from you. This spring, for instance, many farmers over the country noticed little gullies where there hadn't been gullies before. These are definitely tracks of land that have "left home."

During the war years and since our land has been "taking a beating". We've had to keep turning it over and over to grow the food, oil, and fiber crops needed for the war and for the huge demands since the war. Prices have been relatively good and we've been trying to take all we could from our farms. The little gullies indicate we may have taken too much.

We've had some of our land in row crops longer than is safe if we want to hold our soil. The humus and decaying plant materials are being worked out of the soil; the soil's structure is breaking down. It's like having the cement work out from between the bricks of a house. When there's nothing to hold the bricks together it doesn't take much to push the wall over. The house crumbles.

When the soil loses its "stick-together-ness," wind and water easily tear it apart and wash or blow it away. The roots of plants such as alfalfa, clovers, and grasses have been worked out of the land through heavy cropping. The little gullies are just an indication that we've had the land too long out of a protective crop.

Shorter rotations, more crops that protect and hold the soil, and more of the other practices that make up conservation farming are needed. The Agricultural Conservation Program was set up to help farmers conserve their soil -- not to keep it out of production but to keep it producing both now and in the future.

#

TREES BRING WORTHWHILE RETURNS

Trees will hold the soil. They'll bring other returns too.

That is shown by the record of Albert Milde, who operates a farm in Jackson County, Missouri. He has 19 acres of woodland on the farm. He and his son have operated that woodland as they would cropland for 26 years. They have protected the tree crops from fire, kept livestock out, cut the different kinds of trees when they were mature.

Over the 26-year period, returns from the land have included: Lumber for a new house, \$1,700; lumber for a barn, \$1,000; 70,000 feet of lumber for miscellaneous uses, \$1,950; 13,000 feet sold as lumber, \$650; stumpage, \$1,390; 5,000 posts, \$500; \$120 worth of fuel wood annually for 26 years, \$3,120; total \$10,310. That is an annual income of \$20.86 an acre.

###

SOIL MINERALS RUNNING OUT

Farmers over the country are beginning to realize that the minerals of our soils are running out.

The rich heritage of minerals in the soil that make it possible to grow crops is being blown away, washed away, and used up.

Not only are farmers beginning to realize this serious situation, but it has become a serious problem for feed dealers. Grains grown on ground which is deficient in essential minerals fail to get results in growth and production when fed to livestock and poultry.

Some dealers have become aware of these deficiencies and have fortified their feeds with the minerals by direct application. In 1945, over 70,000 tons of phosphoric acid were used in mixed feeds to offset a lack of phosphorus in the soil. Not all dealers and feed mixers did this, and it is not certain that the 70,000 tons took care of the deficiencies in the feed to which it was added.

Certain it is, though, that these mineral deficiencies in the soil will and do show up in feed and food deficiencies. Conservation programs, such as the Agricultural Conservation Program which works with individual farmers on their own farms, is helping to overcome some of the soil deficiencies by assisting farmers to restore some of the mineral losses which have resulted from heavy cropping and erosion.

###

FARMERS HAVE STAKE IN 5-POINT FOOD PROGRAM

Farmers have a double-barreled interest in the 5-point food-conservation program recently offered American housewives by the Department of Agriculture, Mr. John

Doles, chairman of the Louisiana State Production and Marketing Administration Committee, has pointed out. The food program seeks to help stretch the family food money to cover food needs and at the same time to save food for use at home and overseas.

As producers, Mr. Doles said, farmers are interested in the program because it seeks to make the best possible use of farm products, encouraging the consumption of plentiful foods. Farmers hate to see the products of their toil wasted, and many times suffer a financial loss when production exceeds the actual demand for perishable foods.

As consumers, farm people are interested in nutritional diets, and in preserving — by canning, freezing, or other methods — the food which is produced. Farmers also have the same trouble in stretching their dollars to meet today's increased cost of living.

Furthermore, Mr. Doles summed up, world peace is a primary objective of all U. S. citizens, and helping stretch food at home so that we can share what's left with hungry people abroad is a positive step toward that goal.

The five points of the food-conservation program are: (1) Feed your family well, nutritionally; (2) use plentiful foods instead of scarce ones; (3) use food alternates wisely, so that replacements are equally nutritious; (4) serve dishes that extend scarce foods and save money; (5) get your money's worth from the food you buy — avoid plate and storage waste.

#

CONSERVATION ON TWO-THIRDS OF U. S CROPLAND

Although not nearly enough conservation work is being done to check the erosion and depletion that is cutting into the Nation's limited acreage of farmland, almost 308 million acres, or 66.1 percent of the total cropland in the United States and Island Possessions, was on farms which were in the 1946 Agricultural Conservation Program.

_____, chairman of the _____ parish agricultural conservation committee, says that a report covering the activities of the 1946 Agricultural Conservation Program, recently released by the United States Department of Agriculture, shows that 2,851,442 farms were in the 1946 program. Assistance in carrying out conservation practices went to 3,205,131 farmers. The total of this assistance was \$267,555,000, which was about \$83.48 average per farmer.

Mr. _____ pointed out that this \$83.48 was matched generally by the farmer, because program assistance given farmers amount to about half the cost of the practices carried out. Encouraged by the financial aid offered under ACP, many farmers also carry out conservation practices for which no financial aid is received.

Even though not enough, conservation measures being completed are helping to hold the soil and assure the Nation of continued production of food and fiber.

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F O R Y O U R I N F O R M A T I O N

"LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE —" The Uintah County (Utah) ACA Committee "decided to do something" about informing the public as to the true purpose and the actual operation of the Agricultural Conservation Program. Here is a report on some of the committee's excellent public relations activities:

"First we made contact with our local paper and explained our program and our need for getting information to the people, and we received their wholehearted support in getting news in the paper.

"When our local radio station, KJAM, commenced operation we asked them for 15 minutes a day each week; they allowed us this time at 1 p.m. Thursdays. This time we use either for interviews or for farm news, or.....we have a round table discussion over the air for anyone interested in giving their views.

"The last few months we have had a motion picture machine and have shown conservation pictures to most of the schools; we usually give a short lecture on the needs for conservation and the way that AAA helps to get the desired results. The Forest Service has cooperated by loaning us some very good films... We have shown these pictures to 5 Civic Clubs, 4 PTA meetings, and 9 schools. We now have engagements with one Lion's Club in Duchesne County and a number more of PTA groups and schools.

"We also explain when we go to an educational meeting that we do this on our own expense but that we feel that we have a program worth so much to our farmers and to the country that the good it is doing is compensation for us."

According to the State office, the results of the Uintah County Committee's efforts "are very noticeable in the general attitude toward and the accomplishments under the program."

#

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

IN SENATE, January 1, 1900.
REPORT
OF THE
COMMISSIONER OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE,
IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE SENATE
JANUARY 1, 1899.

ALBANY, N. Y.:
JANUARY 1, 1900.
PUBLISHED BY THE
COMMISSIONER OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE
HAS THE HONOR TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE RECEIPT OF
A COPY OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF THE
GENERAL LAND OFFICE, IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION
PASSED BY THE SENATE JANUARY 1, 1899.

THE REPORT IS HEREBY RECOMMENDED TO THE SENATE
FOR ITS CONSIDERATION.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I HAVE HEREUNTO SET MY
HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE, THIS FIRST DAY OF
JANUARY, 1900.

JOHN D. RUSSELL,
COMMISSIONER OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE.

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May 13, 1948

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PMA FARM NEWS

BIG GULLIES FROM LITTLE DITCHES GROW

The Grand Canyon of the Colorado may not have been started by an Indian trail, but what looks like the beginning of a Grand Canyon in Nebraska was started by a single plow furrow. Some 25 years ago a farmer in Logan County, Nebraska, plowed a small ditch to drain a lagoon. The little ditch kept getting bigger and bigger until it was 150 feet deep and more than that wide.

When a group of Logan County farmers got together to stop this growing monster, it had nearly ruined 300 acres of good cropland. In the spring of 1947, John Landry, who owns the "soil consuming gorge," met with three of his neighbors whose land was being damaged, and they figured out a way to corral this "bronco" ditch. County commissioners who were interested in protecting the county roads, the county Agricultural Conservation Committee who were interested in saving the soil, and a construction company with machinery big enough to do the job, were lined up to control this "little Grand Canyon."

The county commissioners put up some of the money, and assistance under the Agricultural Conservation Program "pooling agreement" helped with part of the cost of the project. The farmers put up most of the cost themselves.

A diversion terrace at the mouth of the gorge was constructed, a drainage pipe was put in, four dams were built, and other work done to stop the waste of water and land.

The total cost of the project was \$4,500 -- only a small part of the damage already done and a much smaller part of the damage which would have been done if this huge gully had not been brought under control.

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MORE FALL PIGS REQUESTED Farmers are being urged to boost pig production this fall by 10 percent at the least, more if possible. Louisiana's 1948 goal of hogs to farrow is 112,000 and is the same as the 1947 goal.

Prices of feed grains are expected to be somewhat lower in the 1948-49 feeding year, beginning next October. At the same time, prospects are that continued large consumer demands and smaller output of other meats in 1949 will keep hog prices relatively high.

(NOTE TO PARISHES: Information about pig goals should be put in the hands of every community committeeman.)

###

FARMERS EXPECTED TO MAINTAIN CONSERVATION PRACTICES

Farmers of _____ Parish should understand that, when they carry out conservation practices under the Agricultural Conservation Program, they are expected to maintain, or keep up, these practices. That is part of the responsibility accepted when assistance is received to help carry out the practice.

In explaining this provision of the ACP, _____, chairman of the parish agricultural conservation committee, said that sometimes farmers get the idea that, after the work is done one year and the payment received, there is no further responsibility.

Mr. _____ pointed out that under the provisions of the Program, if the parish committee finds that any conservation practice carried out under a previous year's program has not been maintained in accordance with good farming practices, or if its effectiveness has been destroyed by neglect or failure to keep up the practice, deductions may be made from the current year's assistance earned under the program.

The purpose of the Agricultural Conservation Program is to conserve soil and water and not to make payments to farmers, the parish committeeman emphatically stated. And while all farmers have a responsibility to the Nation to conserve their farmland, farmers cooperating in the ACP have the additional responsibility of safeguarding the investment the Nation has made in conservation through the program assistance.

Most farmers do maintain these practices, the chairman said, but for those few farmers who do not the provision for deductions was set up.

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LONG MAY OUR LAND BE GREEN "Long may our land be green" was the slogan that farmers and townspeople of Wetzel County, West Virginia, repeated as they celebrated Conservation Week. It is a particularly fitting slogan in their county, where most of the land is devoted to grass or tree production.

The week started with sermons in nearly all of the churches of the county on "The earth is the Lord's." Every day that week there was a meeting somewhere in the county at which conservation was discussed. The Boy Scouts, 4-H'ers, Future Farmers, and others had essay contests on "What conservation means to me."

Finally farmers, businessmen, and everyone else interested took part in a conservation tour. On the tour they saw a farm so seriously eroded that it would no longer support a family. In contrast, they saw a wood-lot demonstration, pastures which under conservation management had doubled in production, and haylands that had tripled their production.

#

U. S. RANKS 4th IN
GROWING POTATOES

U. S. farmers grew a lot of potatoes last year. But -- probably indicative of the desperate need for food and the limited growing areas overseas -- three other nations of the world bested the U. S. in both potato production and acreage. In yields per acre, the U. S. was twelfth.

Here's the potato scoreboard:

PRODUCTION, in million bushels: Germany, 900; Poland, 800; France, 480; U. S. 384. In prewar years (1935-39), Poland produced 1.4 billion bushels; Germany, 1.2 billion; France, 573 million; and the U. S., 356 million.

ACREAGE, in million acres: Poland, 5.4; Germany, 5; France, 3; and U. S., 2. Prewar figures are Poland, 6.8 million; Germany, 4.9; France, 3.5; and U. S., 3.

YIELD, in bushels per acre: Netherlands, 340; Belgium, 297; Eire, 287; Switzerland, 267; Denmark, 263; Norway, 239; New Zealand, 226; United Kingdom, 218; Luxembourg, 202; Finland, 199; Portugal, 183; United States, 182; Germany, 179; Sweden, 176; France, 157; Chile, 156; Canada and Spain, 151; and Poland, 148. For the prewar 1935-39 period, the same three countries led in the same order, with yields per acre running 312, 305, and 300; U. S. yields per acre (117) were 31st; France (164), 19th; Poland (205), 13th; and Germany (249), 8th.

Total world production of potatoes for 1947-48 is estimated at 7,280 million bushels, only slightly less than was produced in 1946-47, but about 14 percent less than the 5-year average. Output in both North America and in Europe, however, was down sharply from the previous year.

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BLUE LUPINE SEED TO BE SOLD BY CCC

Here's news for farmers who have found blue lupine valuable as a winter cover crop in helping replenish soil nitrogen: Stocks of about 13 million pounds of 1947-crop blue lupine seed will be offered for sale by the Commodity Credit Corporation after the 1948 crop is harvested.

For seed which germinates 80 percent or better, the selling price will be not less than $4\frac{1}{2}$ cents a pound or higher if the market price at the time of sale is higher than that figure. Seed of less than 80-percent germination will be offered for sale only if it is needed, and at discounts in line with discounts under the 1947 seed loan program.

Blue lupine seed which was not redeemed under the Government's 1947 seed loan program was pooled by CCC for producers' account. About 5 million of the 18 million pounds offered farmers last September were sold.

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F O R Y O U R I N F O R M A T I O N

"KEEPING BAD FARMERS IN BUSINESS" The Colorado Springs (Colo.) News, in an April 2 editorial under the above title (including the quotation marks), had this to say:

Soil conservation, agricultural research and price support have been pretty generally agreed upon as the primary needs for a long-range agricultural program in the United States. That's what the majority of farmers are saying, according to Chairman Hope, Republican, Kansas, of a House of Representatives agricultural committee that is holding a series of hearings thruout the nation.

However, there is a difference of opinion. There are those who oppose. Some of such opposition came to light the other day, at the committee's hearing in Denver. For example, Adolph Winter, a northern Colorado stockman of the Windsor district, struck out vigorously against government subsidies. He insisted that they "keep bad farmers in business," add to consumer costs, and do not help the efficient farmer.

We would suggest that Mr. Winter apparently has either a very short memory, or a very convenient one. He seems to forget the great depression of the late 1920's and the earlier years of the 1930's -- when government loans and subsidies lifted a moribund agriculture, almost totally bankrupt, out of the slough of ruin on to safe and sound ground. We do not believe that government subsidies at that time were "keeping bad farmers in business."

As we recall, they kept all farmers -- the entire agricultural industry -- in business. Without government aid, successful as well as bad farmers would have succumbed. Or does Mr. Winter recall the circumstances?

Far from adding to consumer costs, the result of government assistance was to keep the consumer supplied with food, and at a price far smaller than would have been the case, had agriculture been permitted to sink.

Soil conservation payments have assured methods which not only saved and rebuilt great acreages of soil, but increased productivity of food to help win the war and to feed not only our own people, but many of the starving of the world. Without this program, we hesitate to think what would have resulted from following past neglect and waste of our resources. We have thus had more food, which means cheaper food, than the consumer would otherwise have had available.

In saving and rehabilitating agriculture, the efficient farmer has not only been helped along with the rest, but, let us not forget, so-called "bad farmers" have been transformed into efficient farmers. And that is similarly worthwhile.

Personally, we are opposed to every kind of government subsidy -- to business, industry and labor, even to agriculture -- when the need passes, and when the returns are not greater than the cost.

As for agricultural subsidies, we should keep in mind, however, that their purpose has been primarily to save the soil, which is one of the greatest bulwarks of our nation's strength and vitality. When we save the soil, we save all America -- the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker, quite as much as the farmer himself, or even a stockman in Windsor, Colo.

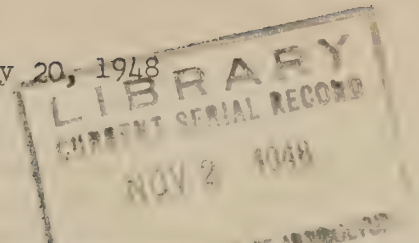
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May 20, 1948



PMA FARM NEWS

DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE WELL RUNS DRY

After the topsoil is gone, is too late to begin thinking about saving the soil, says

_____, chairman of the _____ Parish Agricultural Conservation Committee. He points out that waiting for crop yields to drop and gullies to appear before carrying out conservation practices to conserve soil and water is about like calling the fire department after the house has burned to the ground.

Some land has not been seriously damaged by erosion or depletion, but now is the time to keep it that way. Keep yields high, and the land will help to bear the expense of keeping up the fertility. But let the topsoil get away and with it the soil fertility, and the expense of rebuilding is expensive and the damaged land is not in condition to help bear the cost.

Conservation farming every year is the most economical and most effective farming, says the parish chairman. It is like locking the barn door before the horse is stolen. Conservation farming year in and year out will help the land carry its own conservation costs.

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FARM DEPRESSION UNNECESSARY,
SAYS ANDERSON

Farmers "do not have to go through the wringer again," Clinton P. Anderson told a group in Philadelphia in one of his last speeches as Secretary of Agriculture.

He pointed out, however, that "we must maintain both domestic and foreign policies that will prevent it...we should not wait for trouble to strike before we take the required action. Under favorable circumstances, farmers can probably look forward to a gradual price decline -- perhaps a decline of a third in the next few years."

American agriculture should benefit directly from the European recovery program in two ways, Mr. Anderson said. (1) During the life of the program, it will help to provide stable markets and yet allow farmers to shift their pattern of production in definite steps in order to meet more normal postwar demands; and (2) it should help to rebuild a more permanent European market, which has customarily taken 60 to 75 percent of all U. S. agricultural exports.

While food shortages in the world can be expected for a long time to come, Mr. Anderson stated that eventual solution of the world food problem calls for the development and conservation of natural resources, spreading the knowledge of both agricultural and industrial technology, providing for free-flowing world trade, monetary stabilization, and both national and international arrangements for using farm products that would otherwise become surplus.

Regarding the years "after ERP," the former Secretary said: "American agriculture needs the export markets that can be developed through world economic recovery, but by far its largest market, in time of world food crisis as well as in more normal times, is the home market made up of employed people."

"National policy must recognize the necessity of encouraging industrial activity and full employment...Clearly, then, farm policy and programs must (a) fight delaying actions in periods of price decline so as to maintain balance with industrial prices in fairness to farmers, and (b) provide price stoppers in relation to nonfarm prices...national policy should seek to maintain a floor under consumption and in other ways provide for stable markets."

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COTTON-CROP OUTLOOK IMPROVED

Cotton acreage, yields, and output for 1947 all showed increases over the year before: Here are official Department of Agriculture figures, based on census ginnings and information furnished by crop correspondents, field statisticians, and cooperating State agencies:

Acreage in cultivation on July 1, 1947, amounted to 21.5 million acres, 18 percent more than the previous year, but 12 percent less than the 1936-45 average. Lint yield in 1947 is indicated at 267.2 pounds per harvested acre, 31.9 pounds above 1946 and 16.6 pounds above the 10-year average.

The cotton crop totaled 11,851,000 bales, 3,200,000 bales more than the small 1946 crop but 539,000 bales less than the 10-year average. Cottonseed separated from the lint amounted to 4,679,000 tons, 33 percent more than from the previous year's crop, but about 9 percent less than the average.

The sharp upturn in production more than offset the slight drop in price. The average receipt of 31.9 cents per pound received for 1947 cotton sold before May 1, 1948, is three-fourths of a cent below the average for the 1946 season but 17.1 cents above the 10-year average. The combined value of cotton and cottonseed is estimated at \$2,291 million, only 2½ percent lower than the record 1919-crop returns.

#

BUILDING A FARM IN A DAY

The old time "barn raisin'" of pioneer days has given way to the modern "farm raisin'" in one day, as State after State and county after county takes up the challenge of "doing 10 years' conservation in a day."

One of the more recent demonstrations was in Montgomery County, Tennessee. After the crowds had cleared away, a GI trainee in agriculture was \$10,000 richer in conservation carried out on his farm. Conservation improvements included terracing, planting trees, seeding grasses and legumes, spreading of lime and fertilizer, and a number of other practices.

Tandy Richardson, owner of the farm, was selected by his fellow trainees as the one to get a modern farm in one day. At daylight, large and small tractors with equipment, bush and bog harrows, bulldozers, automatic posthole diggers, rototillers, and all the other modern farming equipment were already at work at the huge job of completely reworking the farm.

A bowl-shaped 12-acre field which had been overgrown with bushes and cut with gullies was cleared and smoothed, plowed, terraced, limed and fertilized, and then sown with fescue and lespedeza for permanent pasture. A farm pond was constructed. Another large acreage was cleared and terraced to be used for rotation crops. Sod waterways were put in. Trees were planted.

The County Agricultural Conservation Committee and the Vocational Agriculture instructors of the trainees sparked the demonstration, but other agencies, civic groups, religious groups, merchants, and dealers cooperated.

A lot of conservation was done but a lot more conservation was taught by the demonstration, said the county ACP committee.

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THE MEANING OF SOIL CONSERVATION What does soil conservation mean to a community? That is a question that more and more communities are considering as they begin to talk over their agricultural conservation plans together.

Some of the answers to the question were found in Tipton community in central Missouri.

One banker who makes loans to carry out soil-conservation practices says that farmers with a good program of soil conservation have confidence and know from experience that they can expect a decent crop.

The Vocational agriculture teacher reports that farmers in evening classes say they are getting good returns from their conservation practices, and that putting money into soil conservation is like putting money in the bank -- it can be drawn on when it is needed most.

One county agent says that the increased income from conservation farming has enabled many farm wives to put in new kitchens, water systems, and electric washing machines.

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GRASS BUILDS CANADA'S SOILS Keeping up the producing ability of their soils is a problem to farmers of Canada as well as other countries. They too have found that grass will help.

At the Ottawa experiment station, scientists compared the amount of organic matter and other fertility elements in soil that had been in grass for 15 years with those in soil which had been in continuous cultivation.

The soil that had been in grass had nearly twice as much organic matter in it, more nitrogen, lime, and phosphate, and the same amount of potash. Parts of both soils were planted to the same crops. The yields of tomatoes and of potatoes on the soils in grass were more than double those in continuous cultivation.

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WHERE GOVERNMENT SPUDS GO

Through May 4, Government price-support purchases of the 1947 crop of potatoes totaled 18,684,650 hundredweight.

Here's how the potatoes were disposed of: 2,106,718 cwt. for direct distribution, such as the School Lunch Program; 1,341,255 for livestock feed; 4,133,521 for alcohol; 558,509 for dehydration; 6,061,555 for export; 942,000 for Interim Aid (France and Austria); 1,301,880 for flour; 1,339,886 for starch; 298,000 for commercial storage; and 281,075 were lost. Disposition of 320,251 cwt. is as yet unreported.

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GREATER PRODUCTION PER ACRE NEEDED

How to produce enough food for an increasing population from a limited acreage of land is one of the serious problems facing agriculture. Each year adds to the number of people to be fed, but each year finds some of our productive land gone.

To hold the land we have and make this limited amount produce more is the big job ahead for _____ parish farmers as well as the farmers all over the country. But _____, chairman of the Parish Agricultural Conservation Committee, points out, hopefully, that some farmers are finding some of the answers to greater production from the same acreage. Using the facilities of the Agricultural Conservation Program, they are, in some instances, doubling the production of land and at the same time protecting it from erosion.

He called attention to the results of pasture improvement practices. As an example he cited the experience of Paul J. Bloch of Keswick in Albemarle County, Virginia.

When Mr. Bloch was encouraged through assistance offered under the Agricultural Conservation Program to do something about his 46-acre pasture, he was pasturing 12 cows and calves--all the land would handle. But instead of trying to buy more pasture so he could keep more livestock, he started in to improve the pasture he had. In just a few years, the carrying capacity of this 46 acres jumped to 30 cows and calves.

What he did was equivalent to buying an additional 69 acres of pasture of the kind he had before improvement. And, Mr. _____ pointed out, buying additional pasture would not have added to the total acreage in production. Ownership would merely have been shifted from one person to another. But by increasing the production without increasing the acreage owned, Mr. Bloch has added to the total production.

The improvement was made through proper grazing and the use of lime and phosphate. Through helping farmers to make better pastures, ACP is helping to solve the problem of more food for more people with limited land.

(Parish offices should replace the illustration in this story with one from their own parish, if possible.)

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FLORIDA PRODUCTION Mr. Grayson of the State Office has recently returned from an inspection for compliance trip to Florida. Sugar mills visited were those of the U. S. Sugar Corporation at Clewiston, the Okeelanta Sugar Cooperative at Okeelanta, and the Fellsmere Sugar Producers Association at Fellsmere. The 1947-48 production of sugar amounted to 78,000 short tons, raw value, from 916,444 tons of sugarcane ground. It is estimated that damage by the September hurricane and subsequent flood conditions reduced production by at least 15%.

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SUGAR BRANCH LABOR SURVEY Messrs. L. F. Diehl and L. K. Bailey of the Wage and Price Division, Sugar Branch, Production and Marketing Administration, will conduct an informal survey of labor and grower-processor problems in the Louisiana sugarcane area beginning May 19. They expect to visit the State Office before beginning their survey to discuss with State Office personnel various wage and price problems.

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F O R Y O U R I N F O R M A T I O N

COOPERATION DOES IT The Fayette County, Kentucky Committee in Lexington has one cooperator without a farm. That cooperator is a local livestock auction sales agency which has a 15-minute radio program 5 days a week.

The program is mostly used to review livestock markets and to advertise the livestock auction sales held regularly by the company. In addition, the company uses on its sponsored program, notices and information about PMA programs from the county office. Such items as delivery of lime, sign up time for ACP, tobacco price supports, wheat support rates, and other information are used. The livestock sales agency feels such information increases the audience, doesn't increase their advertising cost and is a service to agriculture.

The radio program has been very helpful to the county committee.

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May 27, 1948

PMA FARM NEWS

FOLLOW THROUGH ON
CONSERVATION PLANS

Soil is saved and water conserved by conservation practices which farmers carry out and not the ones that never get beyond the planning stage. All farmers in _____ parish who are cooperating in the program are urged to follow through and get the best possible results from the conservation practices for which they have signed up.

Assistance, whether in materials, services or payments, is contingent upon actually carrying out the conservation practices. The farmer must first carry out the conservation practices and then have them approved before he is eligible for payment.

Only so much money is allocated to the parish each year to be used to assist farmers in the parish in carrying out conservation practices. The Parish Agricultural Conservation Committee has the responsibility of using that money to get the most conservation.

When a farmer files with the parish committee his intentions to carry out certain conservation practices and the committee tells him how much assistance he may get, that much of the parish allocation is set aside for him. If the practices are not carried out, the farmer has tied up that much of the funds which might have been used by some other farmer. Farmers who are unable to follow through on practices should let the committee know without delay so the funds can be used by other farmers who need them.

Farmers are urged to carry out the needed conservation practices whether or not assistance can be given on all of them. The committee will do all it can to assist farmers in getting their conservation practices carried out but it cannot go beyond the funds available.

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ACP COMMITTEEMAN TOP FARMER

Each year farmers in the 28,000 agricultural communities of the United States hold elections to choose community committeemen under the Agricultural Conservation Program. Farmer-elected delegates then get together and elect the county committeemen. From the ranks of county committees come the farmer-fieldmen and state committees of the Production and Marketing Administration. This, explains Mr. John Doles, chairman of the Louisiana State PMA Committee is the organization that administers the Agricultural Conservation Program and other programs dealing directly with farmers.

As an indication of the calibre of men selected for these local committeemen jobs, the chairman cites William Redman of Zanesville, Ohio. This community committeeman was selected 1947 Champion in the system-wide soil conservation contest of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad.

Not only is this committeeman teaching conservation to his neighbors but he is living conservation in the operation of his own 362-acre farm. He carried out such conservation practices as the contour strip cropping of 66 acres, the construction of 1,460 feet of sod waterways, the application of 100 tons of lime and 10 tons of commercial fertilizer on permanent pasture, the construction of a farm pond, 3 acres of trees planted, and 1,570 cubic yards of earth moved in filling gullies.

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PRODUCTION BEST MEASURE
OF SOIL LOSSES

Soil losses should be measured in something more than just so many tons of earth washed or blown away.

Soil losses, in a broad sense include all changes that result in decreased productivity for crops and may be grouped under two general heads - physical and chemical. Physical losses usually refer to removal of the soil itself through erosion. Chemical losses include removal of plant food from the soil in crops, through leaching and erosion.

Available nitrogen and phosphorus usually are concentrated in the top-soil. Most of its humus also is in the first few inches of top-soil. This is the soil that is lost in most cases.

Wind erosion carries away the lighter particles such as the tiny roots and decaying leaves and stems of plants. When soil is moved by water the coarser particles settle first - and this is the part of the soil which is least productive.

Some damage has already been done before the soil blows or washes away. Keeping land in a cultivated crop too long breaks down its resistance to erosion. Overworked land usually is more subject to erosion than land that has been recently plowed out of grass and clover.

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KENTUCKY'S CONSERVATION DAYS

Kentucky has her own form of "Soil Conservation Days." The pattern was set in McLean county and was followed later in Logan and Hopkins county.

A farm is selected on which a large number of practices are to be installed according to a farm plan which may include terraces, grassed waterways, application of lime and phosphate and reseeding the land. Farmer neighbors take their tractors, trucks, seeders, and implements to the farm on which the work is to be done the evening before the day set for the demonstration. Early the next morning they start to work. During the morning veterans in training attend the demonstration in groups to see and sometimes take a hand in the work. Other farmers also come to see and learn.

Lunch is served at noon by some community organization. Following that the assembled group hears a distinguished speaker. When the speeches are over the farmers get aboard their machines again and finish the conservation job on the farm.

From such a demonstration everyone has an opportunity to see what a complete conservation plan is; how it is applied to the farm; and what the farm looks like after it has been reorganized.

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HOW WELL-OFF IS U. S. AGRICULTURE?

Ever wondered about this often-talked-about "farm prosperity"? Such stories hardly ever give both sides of the picture, but for every "pro" there is a "con." Here's proof in the following highlights of the present U. S. farm economic situation.

1. Agriculture has reached a prosperity peak, but many farm families are poor.
2. Farm assets continue to rise, but much of the increase valuation could be wiped out by price declines.
3. Liquid assets are a much larger part of the total than when the war started, but debt is beginning to increase, thus raising interest payments, and real estate taxes have risen sharply.
4. Farm product prices are 264 percent of the 1935-39 average and 20 percent above the peak of 1920, but purchasing power of those prices has turned downward.
5. Farm production is running about a third above prewar, but this offers the possibility of surplus troubles worse than in the past in case of market failures.
6. The pattern of production is still based on an abnormal export situation, which means that for both conservation and business reasons farmers must look forward to a considerable adjustment in the production pattern.

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PASTURES CHECK SOIL EROSION

One of the most effective means of checking erosion is to tie the soil down with grass, says _____ chairman of the _____ Parish PMA committee. But when the land is tied down with grass, there must be some profitable use for the grass.

And that's why dairying has come to be such a good conservation practice. In some of the cotton country of the South, dairying has helped to stop much of the ruinous erosion taking place on many farms. Erosion is still a problem, but some farmers are helping to solve it with grass and cows.

*One such is Hugh Vallotton and his family of Valdosta, Georgia.

On the Vallotton farm grass saves the soil and cows use the grass to make a living for the Vallotton's. In 1942, Hugh started extensively in permanent pasture building and he finds that it pays. He now has about 300 acres in permanent and temporary pastures. He was among the first to plant Ladino clover, white Dutch clover, crimson clover, Kobe and Korean lespedeza in his county. In addition to the clovers he has dallas, common Bahia and costal Bermuda pasture grasses.

Lime and phosphate have helped improve the growth of these grasses and legumes. Terraces on the steeper slopes, drainage of the boggy areas and other good conservation practices carried out under the agricultural conservation program are helping the Vallottons to develop their dairy farm.

*Substitute local farmer if possible.

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FEEDING PASTURE INCREASES
ORGANIC MATTER

Fertilizing a pasture pays in many ways, in the opinion of _____ (full name) _____ (title), of the _____ (parish) Agricultural Conservation Committee. It pays in the extra amount of feed produced and in the organic matter added to the soil.

The extra amount of feed produced is easy to measure, but the increase of organic matter often escapes notice.

In North Carolina a check was made of the amount of feed produced and the amount of organic matter in the soil. The pasture was made up of a mixture of Dallas grass and lespedeza. Without fertilizer the pasture produced 1,731 pounds of forage a year. With fertilizer and lime it produced 2,717 pounds. That is an increase of more than 50 percent.

The organic matter in the top six inches of the pasture that had no fertilizer amounted to 16,600 pounds, but where lime and fertilizer had been put on it amounted to 23,600 pounds, an increase of more than 40 percent.

The chairman points out that the increase in top growth helps conserve the soil through the prevention of splash erosion. The added organic matter helps to promote good tilth, increase the water-absorbing capacity of the soil, and its ability to resist erosion.

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FARM SHORTS

Since 1927, grasshoppers have destroyed crops worth 656 million dollars. Their biggest annual feast on record was in 1936, when grasshoppers gobbled up 102 million dollars in crops.

Soil erosion may be a result of crop destruction by grasshoppers. Damage to crops, pastures, and range opens up the way. Complete removal of vegetation, which can result from severe grasshopper invasion, permits the soil to wash and blow and may leave it depleted for years.

The present world food shortage is not a separate and temporary problem. It is an aggravation of the normal situation, extended to areas and peoples that are normally better off.

To achieve positive gains in the fight against hunger, U. S. exports must do more than enable people to exist; they must help other countries to help themselves.

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F O R Y O U R I N F O R M A T I O N

COOPERATION ON CONSERVATION SHOW

What appears to be an excellent example of how various groups and agencies can work together in getting a conservation job done comes from a report of a North Carolina "Farm Face Lifting" demonstration. The demonstration was staged on the farm of Milton Latta of Schley, Orange County, North Carolina. Cooperating in planning and carrying out the event were the County and community Agricultural Conservation Committees, the SCS, the Neuse River Soil Conservation district, the Veteran's farm training program, the Vocational Agriculture Department, the Extension Service, the Farmers Home Administration and the Pomona Grange of Schley.

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